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EQUIPMENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Related Applications: This application is a continuation-in-part of filed 2/6/01 now U.S. Pat. 6,213,539, serial number 09/336,887 which was a continuation-in-part of serial number 09/100,808, filed on June 19, 1998 which issued as 6,042,175.

Field of the Invention. This invention relates to the field of transporting equipment, and particularly, to systems for transporting sports equipment as well as other equipment.

Background of the Invention

The use of sports equipment, as well as other recreational equipment is often hindered by the necessity of transporting the equipment to various locations. One example of this problem is the need to transport bicycles to a desired location, such as a vacation site, tour site, trail site, race, or other locations. Typically this requires either carrying the bicycle in a trunk, bed or backseat of the vehicle or else the use of a carrier of some sort, such as a car top carrier, trunk mounted carrier or receiver mounted carrier.

The use of the interior of the vehicle to transport the equipment creates a number of problems. For instance the lack of available space can be particularly a problem when there are several individuals with their associated equipment involved, especially if there is any significant distance to be traveled. Also, the view of the driver can be easily obstructed by the equipment. There is also a problem associated with damage to the equipment since the vehicle interior is seldom designed to accommodate such equipment. The security of the equipment is also an issue when the vehicle is left unattended, particularly overnight, since it is normally noticeable through the windows of the vehicle.

The use of exterior carriers also have significant problems. Exterior carriers tend to be either the modular component carriers which use racks on the vehicle top, rear or on the receiver, or else the "box-type" carriers which are essentially cargo boxes mounted on the rooftop. These carriers are cumbersome and create significant aerodynamic problems. The security of such devices are also questionable when the vehicle is left unattended. Also, the equipment is normally uncovered and